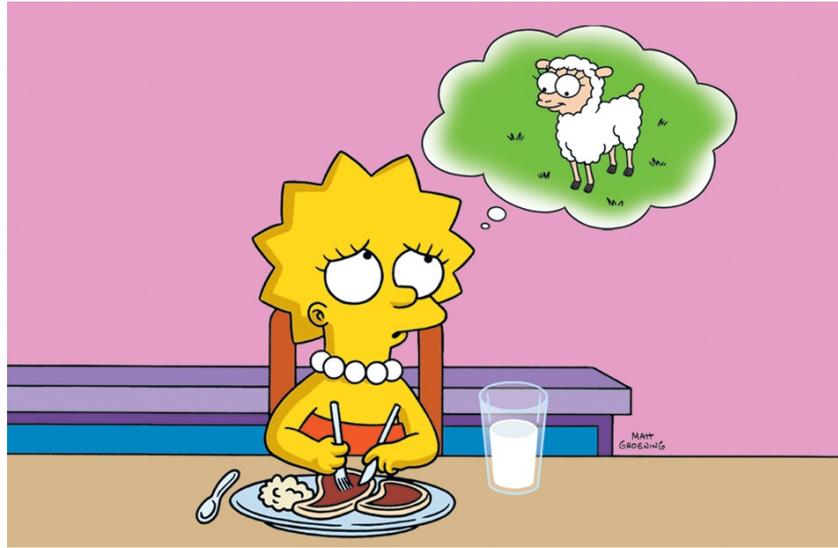


Food, Animals, & The Environment

Fall 2015



Description

This course examines the impacts of contemporary food systems on humans, animals, and the environment, as well as the ethical questions that these impacts raise for food production, consumption, activism, and advocacy. We start with a survey of ethical theory. Do we have moral obligations to animals and the environment? Is morality a matter of intentions, consequences, relationships, or something else? We then discuss the welfare and environmental impacts of industrial food, local food, organic food, GMOs, and more. Finally, we consider the ethical questions these impacts raise in everyday life, including questions about individual vs. collective responsibility; abolition vs. regulation; consumer vs. political activism; intersectional vs. single-issue activism; legal vs. illegal activism; and more.

General Information

- Time: T/R 2:00-3:15
- Place: VN G311
- Instructor: Jeff Sebo
- Email: jeffsebo@unc.edu
- Office: Caldwell Hall #207B
- Office hours: T/R 3:30-4:30
- Course website: jeffsebo.net/teaching/

Readings

The required books for this class are:

- Anna Lappé, *Diet for a Hot Planet*
- James McWilliams, *Just Food*
- Timothy Pachirat, *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight*
- Jonathan Safran-Foer, *Eating Animals*

You can find these books at the UNC-Chapel Hill bookstore as well as online. All readings not from the required books will be distributed by email.

Grading

Your grades will be determined as follows:

- **Exams (75%):** You will complete three take-home exams for this course. Each exam will consist of short essay questions that draw from all of the lectures and readings up until that point. The first exam (20%) will be about six pages long and will be due on 9/26; the second (25%) will be about eight pages long and will be due on 11/7; and the third (30%) will be about ten pages long and will be due the same day as (and will take the place of) our final exam.
- **Daily Questions (15%):** At least one hour prior to each session, you will send me an email with (1) a one-sentence description of one of the main claims from that day's reading and (2) a question or comment about this claim. These will be graded Pass/Fail.
- **Attendance and Participation (10%):** I expect regular attendance and thoughtful participation from all students. My assessment of the quality of your performance on these items will account for 10% of your grade.

Policies

- **Laptops/Cell Phones:** Laptops are allowed, but only for taking notes. Cell phones must be on silent.
- **Special Accommodations:** If you need special accommodations, please let me know so that I can properly assist you.
- **Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. See the UNC Writing Center Handout on Plagiarism, available online, for more information.
- **Late Papers/Extensions/Incompletes:** Late papers will be accepted, but will lose 1/3 letter grade for each day late. Extensions and incompletes will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. If you would like to request either, please do so well before the due date.

Schedule

- **Part 1 - Moral Theory**

8/18 - Paul Thompson, "You are NOT what you eat"

8/20 - Peter Singer, "All animals are equal"

8/25 - Tom Regan, "Human and animal rights"

8/27 - Rosalind Hursthouse, "Applying virtue ethics to our treatment of the other animals"

- **Part 2 - Political Theory**

9/1 - Peter Singer, "Famine, affluence, and morality"

9/3 - Garrett Hardin, "The tragedy of the commons"

9/8 - Henry Shue, "Global environment and international inequality"

9/10 - Wilfred Beckerman, "Sustainable development and our duties to future generations"

- **Part 3 - Industrial Animal Agriculture**

9/15 - Peter Singer, "Down on the factory farm"

9/17 - Timothy Pachirat, "Kill floor," "A politics of sight"

9/22 - Jonathan Safran Foer, "Influence / speechlessness," "Slices of paradise / pieces of shit"

9/24 - Anna Lappé, "The climate crisis at the end of our fork"

- **Part 4 - Alternatives to Industrial Animal Agriculture**

9/29 - James McWilliams, "Food miles or friendly miles?"

10/1 - James McWilliams, "Organic panic"

10/6 - Paul Thompson, "Green revolution food technology and its discontents"

10/8 - Paul Thompson, "Ethics, Risk, and the Future of Food"

- **Part 5 - The Ethics of Food Production**

10/13 - David Wolfson and Mariann Sullivan, "Foxes in the hen house"

10/15 - Fall Break - No Reading

10/20 - Patricia Werhane & Edward Freeman, "Corporate responsibility"

10/22 - Shelly Kagan, "Singer on killing animals"

- **Part 6 - The Ethics of Food Consumption**

10/27 - NY Times Contest, "In defense of eating meat"

10/29 - Cora Diamond, "Eating meat and eating people"

11/3 - Shelly Kagan, "Do I make a difference?"

11/5 - Michael Maniates, "Individualization: plant a tree, buy a bike, save the world?"

- **Part 7 - The Ethics of Food Advocacy**

11/10 - Julie Guthman, "'If they only knew': the unbearable whiteness of alternative food"

11/12 - Eric Holt-Giménez, "Food security, food justice, or food sovereignty?"

11/17 - Gary Francione and Robert Garner, "The animal rights debate"

11/19 - Iris Marion Young, "Activist challenges to deliberative democracy"

- **Part 8 - The Ethics of Food Activism**

11/24 - Ned Hettinger, "Environmental disobedience"

11/26 - Thanksgiving Break - No Reading

12/1 - James and Grace Lee Boggs, "Revolution and evolution"

12/5 - Optional Session - Final Paper Due